

Caltrans District-4 Bicycle Advisory Committee
Minutes
October 20, 2010 1:30 – 3:30 PM
District 4 Headquarters, Mountain View Room, 15th Floor,
111Grand Avenue, Oakland

Attendance:

Ina Gerhard, Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Coordinator
Michelle DeRobertis, Chair, Santa Clara VTA
Andrew Casteel, Bay Area Bicycle Coalition (BABC)
Alan Forkosh, California Association of Bicycling Organizations
Bruce “Ole” Olsen, Delta Pedalers
Robert Cronin, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
Paul Goldstein, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
Leo Du Bose, East Bay Bicycle Coalition
Dave Campbell, East Bay Bicycle Coalition
Wynn Kageyama, Fremont Freewheelers Bicycle Club
Carol Levine, Oakland BPAC/BABC
Mark Lucas, Napa Valley Bicycle Coalition
Adrienne Harris, Richmond Bicycle Committee (via telephone)
Rick Marshall, Napa County Public Works (via telephone)
Christine Culver, Sonoma County Bicycle Coalition (via telephone)
Steven Schmitz, Sonoma County BPAC (via telephone)
Pat Giorni, public member
Ron Kiaaina, Caltrans Project Management East
Roland Au-Yeung, Caltrans Office of Traffic Safety
Valerie Heusinkveld, Caltrans Environmental Analysis
Sergio Ruiz, Caltrans Environmental
Vince Bonner, Caltrans Design
Cheryl Nevares, Caltrans Project Management East
Amy Spark, Caltrans Environmental
Shankar Kutty, Caltrans Design
David Wilkerson, Caltrans Design

1. 1:30 PM Welcome and Introductions

2. 1:35 PM Approval of April 21, 2010 Meeting Minutes

http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/d4_bac_mom072110.pdf

The minutes were approved with no additions or corrections.

3. 1:40 PM Niles Canyon Project (State Route 84 in Alameda County) – Ron Kiaaina, CT, All

Ron Kiaaina, CT Project Manager, presented the project and CT efforts to address concerns raised at the public meetings with the cities of Fremont, Sunol, and Union City.

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/niles2presentation101020.pdf>

Improvements along Niles Canyon are divided into 3 projects, all programmed and funded. Niles Canyon 1 consists of realignment and widening between the Rosewanes Underpass and Farwell

Underpass with construction scheduled from Fall 2010 to Fall 2013 to incorporate standard 8' shoulders. Niles Canyon 3 is the Alameda Creek bridge replacement project, the DEIR targeted to be released by the end of 2010, and construction scheduled from Summer 2013 to Fall 2015.

The focus of this discussion is Niles Canyon 2, a 4.4 mile shoulder widening from the Alameda Creek Bridge to I-680, with construction scheduled from Summer 2012 to Fall 2014. The project is fully funded by State Highways Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) for a total capital cost of \$36M. The draft document was released in July, 2010. Planned completion of the environmental process is February, 2011 with final design and right of way acquisition in May 2012.

State Route 84 is heavily traveled with 14,000 vehicles per day, 2 ½% being trucks. A safety analysis completed in 2003 showed that the rate of cross centerline fatal collisions was higher than the statewide average. Existing conditions include a two lane conventional highway in a rural setting with narrow shoulders that vary between 2' and 8', a posted 45mph speed limit and 30-35mph warnings at spot locations. A centerline rumble strip (soft median barrier) installed in 2007 as an interim safety improvement. It is an environmentally sensitive area.

The proposed safety improvements consist of widening the shoulders to meet current standards (8 ft), plus installation of centerline and shoulder rumble strips throughout the project.

Regarding the rumble strips, ground-in rumble strips that became known as "Standard Plan A40B" will be used based on a 2001 study that evaluated several designs and recommended these as "bicycle friendly" to be used wherever bicycle travel is permitted, while providing the critical noise and vibration needed to alert errant vehicle drivers. Niles Canyon 2 would provide a 1' wide rumble strip, ground to a depth of 5/16" located to the right of the travel lane, 6" into the 8' to 10' shoulder, which will leave a minimum of paved minimum 6.5' shoulder of paved shoulder.

Retaining walls constructed of sculpted concrete "rock" are proposed in areas where there is a 10' shoulder to reduce environmental and scenic impact. The State Historic Preservation Office will be contacted to determine whether the 24 mature, healthy eucalyptus blue gum trees pose any biological or historic significance in the area known as "The Spot" where Charlie Chaplin made a number of films. Caltrans would consider replanting Redwoods or other fast growing native species either onsite or on other properties to mitigate the blue gum loss. Caltrans will look into crash history at this site.

The D4 BAC, although generally in favor of the project because of the benefits provided by the widened shoulders, expressed the following concerns:

- That vehicular speeds might increase with lane and roadway widening;
- Shoulder rumble strips may be an impediment to bicyclists traveling in the shoulder;
- The configuration of shoulder rumble strips at narrow bridges and pinch points created by parked/disabled vehicles will force bicyclists to merge into the travel lane.

Therefore, it was requested that Caltrans study the following two issues:

1. The impacts of shoulder rumble strips on bicycling to answer the question whether shoulder rumble strips improve or degrade safety for bicyclists? Evidence should be provided of the assumption shoulder rumble strips enhance bicycle safety by acting as a soft barrier between vehicular and bicycle traffic based on studies of previous installations

of shoulder rumble strips in California. Furthermore, shoulder rumble strips, if installed, should be discontinued early enough before bridges or any sections that do not meet Caltrans standards to allow bicyclists to merge into the travel lane.

2. The potential of the roadway widening to result in higher vehicle speeds and the resultant safety impacts to cyclists/pedestrians? Higher speeds increase the severity of collisions, in particular for non-motorized travelers. Is there consideration to decrease traffic lane width in order to provide traffic calming? What other design options been considered to slow traffic speeds?

The committee also suggested creating Class II bike lanes and/or use colored pavement for the shoulders as tested by the State of Florida DOT. This treatment was shown to nullify the effect of wider roadways and 85th percentile speeds did not increase.

A number of written comments were submitted to address the DEIR. If submitted to Ina, she will email them to the group.

4. 2:20 PM Scofield Bridge Replacement Bike Detour (Interstate 580 near Toll Plaza) – Sergio Ruiz/David Wilkerson, CT

CT staff is seeking input on how to provide bicycle access during the replacement of the Scofield Bridge decks along I-580 near the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge toll plaza where bikes are using the shoulder to go from Richmond to Point Molate. There will be detours for vehicle traffic during construction, which is expected to last for about two years. With the temporary elimination of shoulders during construction, eastbound bicycle access between Point Molate and Point Richmond will be impacted for approximately two years while westbound bicycle traffic will be impacted for approximately one year. Caltrans is proposing a shuttle service for both westbound and eastbound bike travel. When completed, the existing bicycle access will be restored. There are currently no bike count data for this location, but anecdotal observation suggests that the numbers are very low. Caltrans stated that there is not sufficient width to provide for safe bicycle access during construction without extending project duration.

A separate project sponsored by the City of Richmond and Chevron to provide a Class I bike path connection to Point Molate as part of the Bay Trail is in the early planning stages. Asked if Caltrans could schedule its project after the Richmond Bay Trail link is completed, the response was that the bridge decks must be replaced now as there are structural and safety issues.

This item will be revisited at the next BAC meeting in January. Caltrans was asked to present more specifics on the shuttle service proposal (suggestions: posted cell phone number to call for service; service to include after dark hours). Caltrans was also asked to take bicycle counts, extend outreach efforts to the neighborhood groups/Yacht Club employees for input, and provide information on detour/shuttle service on its website during the construction period.

http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/transplanning/docs/580_scofield_deck_repl_bike_detour_prop.pdf

5. 2:35 PM Update on Caltrans Complete Streets Implementation - Ina Gerhard, CT

The planned SHOPP presentation was cancelled. Instead Ina reported on the CT statewide Complete Streets (CS) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings. The CT TAC provides input/ follow-up on the CS Implementation Action Plan and 73 action items of the plan.

- At the moment, the TAC is meeting monthly.
- Highway Design Manual will most likely be released in mid-November and the comment period will be open for at least 6 weeks;
- Systems Planning Guidance to be completed mid-2011. System Planning documents deal with State routes/corridors, evaluate how a travel corridor is performing and develop a long-range planning vision and priorities for each route. They describe existing facilities, and project anticipated or forecasted needs and conditions. They have so far focused on motor vehicle traffic; in the future more consideration is expected to be given to non-motorized modes..

Link to D4 System Planning website: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/systemplanning/>

- State Highway Preservation and Protection Program (SHOPP) process: Initial performance measure checklist (output reporting document/tool) includes CS features such as linear miles of new sidewalks, bike lanes, shoulders, bulb-outs, crosswalks; however, project selection process and scoping under various program categories is unclear. HQ is working to get a better handle on this.
- Transportation Systems Information: Responsible for data collection/performance evaluation: Assets Report now includes CS assets such as linear miles of new sidewalks, bike lanes, shoulders, bulb-outs, crosswalks, or upgrade/paving of existing sidewalks, bike lanes, shoulders, bulb-outs, crosswalks.

6. 2:45 PM Update on Various Projects – Ina Gerhard, CT

- 1) Skyline Drive (State Route 35 in San Mateo County)/Skyridge Drive in Pacifica
The Homeowners Association contact person died leaving no successor until recently. Caltrans does not want to move forward without full neighborhood consultation since an elected official was involved in getting the bollards put in place 12 years ago. Communication with the Homeowners Association continues to be difficult.
- 2) Bike lane vs. bike route on Stage Gulch Rd (State Route 116 in Sonoma)
Caltrans management has decided to provide an “enhanced” Class III with more frequent Bike Route signage and additional warning signs within the project limits. There will be standard 8’ shoulder with shoulder rumble strips. The committee requested bicycle volume and accident traffic counts on proposed projects before shoulder rumble strips are installed. The question was raised if Caltrans can ignore a local agency’s designation of Class II, especially since that might be incompatible with shoulder rumble strip installation. Michelle will research if there is guidance on incompatibility of shoulder rumble strips with Class II. Caltrans expressed concern over the lack of consultation during the development of the countywide bicycle plan.
- 3) Bikeway signage to Dumbarton Bridge
Contract award was delayed. Now that State budget is signed and contract is awarded, contractor could produce signs and posts to be installed by Maintenance along the route. Uniform signage is preferred and has to be developed between the cities and may be Bay Trail. Per Randolph Craig with Menlo Park BAC, the issue was discussed at their Sept. 13 meeting.

7. 3:00 PM Committee Operational Issues - All

- Ina received 4 applications for agency membership so far (Santa Clara VTA, Marin TAM, Alameda City of Berkeley, Napa County) and 8 for advocacy membership, which were referred to respective bike coalitions.
- Charter is somewhat confusing in terms of how the selection process is supposed to happen (through CT or through CMA); charter language may need to be revised. (“County transportation agency representatives shall be either staff from the CMA or, if unavailable, a city staff from that county nominated by the CMA’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) or equivalent. The agency staff ideally would be the staff to their respective BAC.”)

8. 3:20 PM Work Plan Review and Update - All

This item was postponed. See below for proposed future meeting dates.

9. 3:25 PM Future Agenda Items/Announcements/Adjourn

Nothing under this agenda item

D4 BAC meeting dates in 2011:

January 19, 2011

April 20, 1011

July 20, 2011

October 19, 2011